a night; & I would were sure did. So would have written with certainty.

It's difficult to settle down, to read, write or think.
But I'm better in this & ah. The air is so fresh, &
I've been a walk with L. over the marsh. & we
feel unreasonably cheerful again.

But one's mind seems to freeze & jam for the
effects in these spasmodic scraps. I've not tried yet to
write, but dip into the Science of Life, (Wells) & Goethe &
various poems — & then there's the old woman in the cottage
aged 91, who can't see, or move; & we give her 10/- & the
Boy we are her best friends but the weekly bodie — & then
there's the Cashook to be Enrolled, & there's the greenhouse full
of Carnations, & Maynard & Keynes, & Lydia giving
us Christmas dinner, & so on & so on & so on. further word

V.

Rota 2.4.43

NYPL

Sunday
27 4 Dec 1931

The latest news of L.S. is that he's rather better on anything, & though the Dr. won't say that this is lasting, I can't help feeling that 48 hours of improvement must mean something solid. They now again think its typhoid, are having fresh Examinations — what seems clear is that Lytton himself is making a fight, not sinking into unconsciousness, as they feared.

All this keeps one oddly numb in the head — though I'm much less anxious the 2nd time. There's the telephone at 5 — what's the news — Even at 12 in the morning.

but for the first time today I feel a wish to write
& have no pain, & do hope that with luck I may
shake into words tomorrow. I've been a muddy
walk to the river. Your letter & Ely's came
this morning. Tomorrow the frost of fort will
be over, & newspapers, &c. In some ways a help —
there's a certain luxury in being isolated. Can you
see I can't wait. I'll let you know when we
decide to go to Ungerford. But anyhow not till
the end of the week, I should think. Nessa comes
on Tuesday & the Stracheys are consumed with
family love: 7 of them are sitting in an Inn
& there are, as you may suppose, complications with the
different varieties of wives.

It's what are annoying at a distance
but harrowing in the house itself.
Glad my letter as long as humble.

NYPL

Rota 2.4.63

but for the first time today I felt a wish to write,
& have no pain, & do hope that with luck I may
shape into words tomorrow. I've been a muddy
walk to the river. Your letter & Ethel's came
this morning. Tomorrow the frost of fort will
be over, & newspapers, &c. In some ways a help —
there's a certain luxury in being isolated. Can you
do I can't walk. I'll let you know if we
decide to go to Hungerford. But anyhow not till
the end of the week, I should think. Nessa comes
on Tuesday & the Stracheys are conjured with
family love: 7 of them are sitting in an Inn
& there are, as you may suppose, complications with the
different varieties of wives.

Rota 2.4.63

It's what are amusing at a distance
but harrowing in the house itself.
Glad my letter as long as Virginia's.

NYPL

B or C

Charges to pay s. d.

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From 15 Tad

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Telegrams for INLAND addresses may be handed to the messenger who delivers this form.
The Post Office accepts telegrams by telephone.
This form, and if possible the envelope, should accompany any enquiry respecting this Telegram.

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		Dec 28 1931 Lewes	12

M

To

THE INFORMATION OVERLEAF WILL INTEREST YOU.

D 2.50

A

— Rp. Smyth Mayford

Please say how you are. Lytton rather better

Virginia

If you wish me not to have another headache, you will get well instantly.

Marks House,
Tuesday, 29th Dec. 1931

Well, Ethel dear, I was very glad to get your staggering whisky letter this morning, & to be in touch with you for a moment, even so. I don't gather what your illness is — a chill? influenza? rheumatism? fever? — Was it the after effect of that ghastly game of golf, when the pain made you laugh? Any details will be gladly received, for I like to realise as you know. Small facts. What's your temperature, for instance — can you eat; can you read, have you pain, what pain, where? — but you must not articulate. I know the screw it means, & finding thought into actual words when one's ill. A great gulf lies between mind & words.

Leyton is of anything better. But its puzzling. On Sunday they say its typhoid; then got another specialist yesterday, who says positively that not a the question, but it may be paralytoid, a probably ulcerated colon, & so on, is an illness that must go on, being nervous, with one down for weeks. The last man, however,

said he had 'a good fighting chance', which is far more than they said last week, & all the doctors are amazed by his strength. It's the good Anglo-Indian blood; I always feel a toughness & sanity in Lytton, for all his look of weakness. Also he is determined to live. This being so, they think it better we should put off coming, as they are still all there – 5 or 6 brothers & sisters sitting devoted playing cross word puzzles in the Inn. They will want frenzy calm I imagine, & I'm selfishly glad not to go this week, being rather liable to get him if I make an effort. I woke up with rather a bout of it yesterday morning, & so put off my writing. But it cleared off, & I'm very comfortable today, only shall take another few days of entire sloth, by way of precaution. Also there is no great reason why I should write.

No, I don't think you're right about my caring for 'so few'. What would you have said had you seen me when I got no answer to my telegram to Woking? For some reason, none came till 7, though I wired at 3. By 6 o'clock I imagined you incautious, so that the telegram had'nt been opened. By 6.30 I was in such a

Rota 3.4.63

fidget I could not sit & read up here with L. I imagined telegraph boys knocks — went to the door — no one.: imagined telephoning — but of this & unknown what the good? Mary would tell me nothing. And so on. At last, to fidget myself, I went down to fidget with the dinner in the kitchen, & then, unmistakably heard a feeble tap on the window, & there was the idiot boy, come to the wrong door, in a howling wind. Had him in & gave him all my spare coppers as thanks giving. No, I think you greatly underrate the strength of my feeling — so strong they are — such caverns of gloom & horror open round me I daren't look in — & also their number. do you know how I cared for Katherine Mansfield, for Charlie Sanger — to mention friends only.[2] No, you dont. But then, for months on first knowing you, I said to myself. here's one of these talkers. They dont know what feeling is, happily for them. Because Everyone I most honour is silent — Nessa, Lytton, Leonard, Maynard: all silent; & so I have trained myself to silence: induced to it also by the

terror I have of my own unlimited capacity for feeling — when Lytton seemed to be dying — well yes: I cant go into that, even now. But to my surprise, as time went on, I found that you are perhaps the only person I know who shows feeling and feels. Still I cant imagine talking about my love for people, as you do. Is it training? Is it the superficial fear I have of the unknown force that lurks just under the floor boards? I never cease to feel that I must step very lightly on top of that volcano. NYPL

No Ethel, there's a mint of things about me, I say egotistically. You've no notion of: the strength of my feelings is only one. To get work, a set down to your A.B.C. again. I was angelic of Lady B. to work. Now I believe she would see how fond of you I am, being simpler, more sensible than some wild cats, uncastrated, entire, that I know of.

It's bitter cold, all white snow over Cabra one moment, iron black the next. I'm sitting over the fire in my upstairs room, where you left it, with lots of books, oh & unanswered letters. Everybody's taken to writing to me about The Waves. after 2 months I've just been able to set to the end. About Gwen Raverat— I write in triumph today so.

Rota 2.4.63

(I trust you're in a state when gossip may amuse — have the boys lying in your blankets & now & then lazily read a line — that's what I do in your state, — find it wiles away the time to lunch) — well, Gwen is the army oldest friend, George Darwin's daughter, all Cambridge, all Darwin, Solidity, integrity, fora & sense. What must she do, but take to art. Then she did with a scientific thoroughness that used to make us flee. But somehow she persevered, went to France, met — no this was at Cambridge — a French boy, Jacques: fell violently in love; forced him, we used to think, to give up his lighter & more lascivious loves, to marry her. What a passion his love was! I came in for some flashes of jealousy — not mine — of another woman: & was blinded — never saw such crude what they call Elemental passion: unscrupulous, tyrannic, pure — before or since. And then the ~~wedding~~ marriage: they both painted: he like a Darwin, by science, love, sense: & he rather stiff, but logical & exact & very French. And then he began to stumble: the doctors said his spine was affected: through 10 years I watched his slowly stiffened, till the paralysis

reached his hands, which had to be tied to the paint brushes: & given
lifted him, rubbed him, drove him in a pony cart over the hills at
Vence, to paint: & so he was finally tortured to death, watching it
come, with rage, with obscenity — he wrote me page after page, & the at
last wrote for him - of despair, of defiance. They were incredibly
brave: & yet it was unspeakably sordid, for he couldn't die, & was
jealous, & equally tormented, & adored her, & loved her, & the
suffered, as I imagine, more than mind humanly possible, till at last
the almost killed him, with the dose of morphia after another — the
doctors saying the martini, & she defying them. After he died, I
year ago. She came back to England, with the two children: & acted to
to me, her unhappiness was such that she ought not to see me. She became
set, frozen, like an old log dried out of all sensation, save for the children. And
then she fell in love again: & the man married somebody else. And somehow
I got her a job on Tide, Tide; & she stumps about, to me still frozen. for midable,
— I can't get over her hat; but if you see her as a living, normal woman,
probably its true. And I avoid seeing her, because I know of her hart: &
I feel that she wishes to avoid that, & so lunches with Lady
Rhondda. Good bye V.

NYPL

POST CARD

Dame E. Smyth

Coign

Woking

NYPL

Rota 2.4.63

Friday 1st Jan
1932

Lytton still better
Hope to write
tomorrow or
possibly ring
up about
1 from London

VW.

Monks House,
Monday. Jan 4th 1932

No time to write, owing to the expenses of the post & the need of catching this moment of sun. But very glad of your letter; I will return Ellis & send the number of the unobtainable Hawk. It strikes me — did you pluck the leather from your own breast — was it your bolster? And did you catch cold for wanting it? Never was there such a Pelican. Ehen a Dickens Gabby hit my view: but I'll enlarge later — the maid wading through

the long poem is a masterpiece that has always
stuck in my mind. And I want to develop a
theory that I am really like Dickens myself, had it
not been for the novels in my time — I mean
suddenly produce — I have now 5 books in my
mind & seven another set of verses &c. must dig in
day out! London NYPL was rather a strummage. but I'm
glad I'm sure; & can write lines in my head.
And don't blame me, lying down like an Indian, &
saying 'Death'; for really I find your atmosphere
full of ozone; a necessary element; & one in my
set they never praise me & never love me, openly; —
I admit there are times when silence chills & the
other thing fires. So don't die I intreat, in a hurry &
pray. I rather hate. I see Oliver, the brother, in
London, who was magnificent with the 18th Century

Rota 2.4.63